

Mr. VENIOT: They are contributing now.

Mr. MANION: No.

Mr. VENIOT: If they are in the pension fund.

Mr. MANION: No; the Canadian National Railways has no contributory pension fund.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. MacNicol): I would direct the attention of hon. members to the fact that they are addressing one another instead of the chair.

Mr. VENIOT: I am glad you called me to order because I am not the only guilty one. Perhaps this practice will be stopped.

Under these regulations a man would obtain no protection unless he had served a stated number of years and had reached a certain age upon retirement. I want to see that the men are fully protected. If the government believe that they are not as fully protected in this way as they should be, I wish to have a clause placed in the act giving the employees the protection which I feel they should have.

I come to another reason why I am opposed to clause 1. As I said in my remarks on this bill when it was before the house for second reading there is nothing in the bill itself to conserve the status of the old Intercolonial railway. The act, I think it is chapter 172, defines what the old Intercolonial is or shall be. I may be told that we have sufficient protection under the British North America Act, and that nothing contained in this bill can or will supersede the British North America Act as relating to the Intercolonial railway. That may be so, but if power is given under this bill to a board of trustees to lease the road or any section of government owned road or any branch line connected with the government main line, without reference to the governor in council or to parliament, and if the board did put such a lease into effect, the people of the maritime provinces would have the burden cast upon them of protesting before the governor in council or carrying their case to the Supreme Court of Canada. That is something we wish to avoid, and I suggested to the minister on the second reading that a general clause might be inserted at the end of the bill or in any part of it which would absolutely guarantee and safeguard the status of the old Intercolonial railway.

The minister may reply that that is not necessary. But on the question of amalgamation, when there was a great deal of doubt on this side of the house whether the bill as

[Mr. Manion.]

laid before parliament might not mean amalgamation, the Prime Minister in order to satisfy that doubt on this side of the house consented to insert a clause stating absolutely that there would be no amalgamation. All I ask the Minister of Railways to do now is to insert in this bill, before it goes through, a clause absolutely guaranteeing the status of the Intercolonial. Here is the clause I would suggest, and while its phraseology may be a little on the rough side as I jotted it down hurriedly, it could easily be put into legal phraseology that would meet the occasion:

Nothing in this act contained shall authorize or empower the board of trustees to lease in whole or in part the Intercolonial railway so called or any branch line constructed connecting with said Intercolonial railway constructed or purchased by the government of Canada.

The reason I include the branch lines connecting with the Intercolonial railway is this: While in the original construction of the Intercolonial they did not form a part of it, and while perhaps they are not included in section 145 of the British North America Act, the Intercolonial at Campbellton, New Brunswick, is connected with what is known as the old International railway from Campbellton to St. Leonard, a distance of 108 miles. That International road, constructed in 1908, was acquired by the Canadian government to become part and parcel of the amalgamation which is known to-day as the Canadian National Railways.

There is also the old Canada Eastern railway connecting Newcastle with Fredericton, a distance of 113 miles. In each case the Canadian Pacific almost joins these roads at St. Leonard and Fredericton. There is nothing in this bill to prevent the board of trustees, if they see fit, leasing the old International from Campbellton to St. Leonard to the Canadian Pacific, thereby giving a deep water terminal to the Canadian Pacific in northern New Brunswick. Should such a thing happen what will take place? All freight from Montreal destined for northern New Brunswick would be carried over the Canadian Pacific to St. Leonard, then cross over to Campbellton, and the Intercolonial would become a mere distributing agent for that freight as local freight. The same thing might be done with the Canada Eastern line from Fredericton to Newcastle or to Chatham, where again the Canadian Pacific would get a deep water terminal. We know in northern New Brunswick that the Canadian Pacific have had an eye for a deep water terminal either on the baie des Chaleurs or the gulf